

REMARKS

Claims 8-12, 14, 15, 18, and 19 are pending in this Application. By this Amendment, claims 1-7, 13, 16 and 17 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Applicants specifically state that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the allowance of claims 8-12, 14, 15, 18 and 19. As claims 1-7, 13, 16 and 17 are canceled, only allowed subject matter is pending in this Application.

With respect to the prior art rejections, claims 1, 3, 4 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seaton (U.S. Patent No. 5,591,299) in view of Mairs, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,874,960). Claims 2, 5, 7 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seaton in view of Mairs, et al. and further in view of Ogushi, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,385,497).

The rejections are respectfully traversed in the following discussion.

I THE PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

A. The 103(a) Seaton and Mairs reference rejection

In rejecting claims 1, 3, 4 and 16 the Examiner alleges that the combination of Seaton and Mairs renders the rejected claims obvious. However, as the rejected claims are canceled, the rejection is moot.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

B. The 103(a) Seaton, Mairs and Ogushi reference rejection

In rejecting claims 2, 5, 7 and 13 the Examiner alleges that the combination of references renders the rejected claims obvious. However, as the rejected claims are canceled, the rejection is moot.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

II. CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 8-12, 14, 15, 18 and 19, all

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the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any over payment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,



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